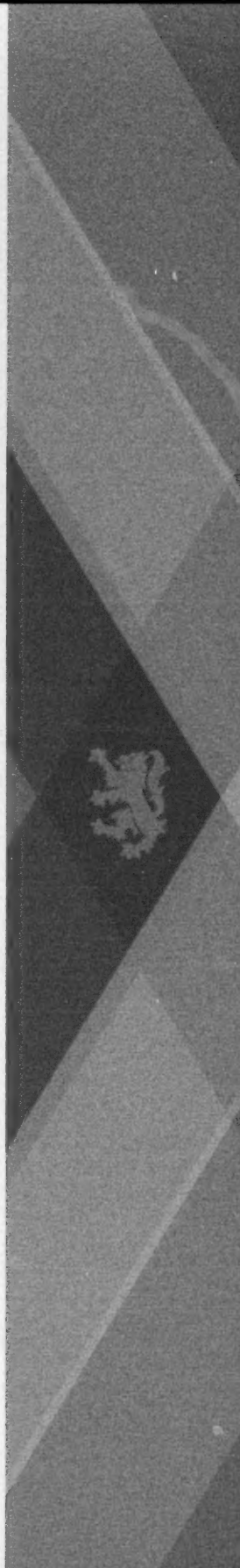
Business Plan
2016–2017

Department of Municipal Affairs

NOVA SCOTIA



Minister's Message

I am pleased to share with you the 2016–2017 Business Plan for the Department of Municipal Affairs (DMA). Programs and services are provided by Policy, Planning and Advisory Services, Grants, Programs and Operations (including the Office of the Fire Marshal) and the Emergency Management Office (EMO). With a wide variety of programs and services, the department is committed to supporting municipalities to ensure healthy, safe and vibrant communities.

In 2016-17 we will make further progress on the development of programs, policies, legislation and initiatives which support that objective. In addition, DMA will undertake a number of actions in a number of key areas.

We will continue to lead governance and structural reform by providing support for municipalities that are committed to a process of re-structuring.

This year, as well, will continue toward setting out the future direction of priorities for the province and municipalities through the development of a Partnership Agreement. This will strengthen the provincial-municipal relationship as the province and the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities negotiate our collective responsibilities and commitments going forward.

Regional Enterprise Networks provide regional economic leadership and develop regional economic strategies, while supporting small, local businesses. Throughout the year, we will coordinate with other government departments and crown corporations to enhance the work of these important organizations.

In addition, in alignment with the One NS Report, we will enhance land use planning to support economic development in communities across the province.

We will also ensure maximize access to federal funding for municipalities and infrastructure improvements which have broad public benefits and contribute to long-term economic growth and prosperity.

I look forward to our continued work to make a difference in our communities and to the lives of Nova Scotians.

Sincerely,

Zach Churchill
Minister, Department of Municipal Affairs

Department Mandate:

The Department of Municipal Affairs (DMA) values the vital role municipalities play in building a strong, vibrant Nova Scotia. From supporting sound governance, to delivering a broad range of municipal services, to protecting Nova Scotians in times of emergency, the department is committed to supporting our municipalities to ensure healthy, safe and vibrant communities. These programs and services are provided by Policy, Planning and Advisory Services, Grants Programs and Operations (the Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM)) and the Emergency Management Office (EMO).

Most of these responsibilities are fulfilled through the ongoing services and programs that are delivered by the DMA's core business areas; however, a number of our priorities over the next year will directly influence and/or support the government's three areas of focus (People, Innovation and Education).

We all have a collective responsibility to advance not only the department's priorities but also the government's priorities to move us forward.

Department's link to government's three priorities:

Over the next year, our work at DMA will be guided by the government's three areas of focus; People, Innovation and Education (PIE). DMA will directly influence and advance government's priorities as set out below.

Innovation

1. Set the future direction of priorities for the province and municipalities through a Partnership Agreement with respect to inter-governmental responsibilities and commitments going forward.

Outcome to be achieved: Set future direction forward with respect to intergovernmental responsibilities.

Goals:

- Utilize the recommendations from the Fiscal Review process and consultations to inform the content of the new agreement.
- Establish a plan for addressing recommendations from reports including the NS Property Tax Study, Towns Task Force, Fiscal Review, as well as other UNSM resolutions to improve DMA's relationship with municipalities and fulfill the One NS Report.
- Strengthen municipal-provincial relationships.

Actions - to achieve success, DMA will:

- Continue to work with municipalities and the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) to provide guidelines and develop a strategic approach to climate change adaptation that is aimed at building capacity, resilience, and reducing the costs associated with climate-related damages (Municipal Climate Change Action Plan and other provincial & municipal Priorities).

Inputs:

- Cross departmental negotiation team, with Department of Municipal Affairs providing support.

Performance measures:

- Signed document addressing recommendations from joint municipal-provincial studies that sets the path forward for municipal relations.

2. Work with other government departments and crown corporations such as Business, Labour and Advanced Education, Nova Scotia Business Inc. and others to continue to develop a model for the Regional Enterprise Networks (RENs) that supports shared economic development objectives, youth workforce attachment, and rural entrepreneurship.

Outcome to be achieved: Align with the economic goals for the OneNS Report.

Goals:

- Improve the economic climate in Nova Scotia.
- Cultivate close working relationships with the business community to retain and grow existing businesses and to support and develop new businesses.
- Enhance cooperation and collaboration with municipal economic development staff.
- Support the Government Framework for Private Sector Growth.

Actions - to achieve success, DMA will:

- Develop a RENS strategic plan
- Present a model to the Private Sector Growth Committee illustrating how the provincial government could interact with the RENs and how information collected from the RENs can be used to support the development of appropriate policy and program supports for private sector growth in the province.
- Work with other provincial government departments to utilize outside information (from the RENs) to direct and inform the development of provincial government policy.

Inputs:

- $1.8 million in funding is currently provided. This program and budget were transferred from Economic and Rural Development in April 2015.
- A newly appointed RENs Coordinator.
- Will work with other provincial departments (Labour and Advanced Education, Department of Business) on the path forward.

Performance measures:

DMA is currently developing performance measures that will assess:

- The development, implementation, and monitoring of regional economic development strategies by the RENs that are reflective of provincial and regional economic development priorities.
- The RENs' cultivation of close working relationships with the business community and key partners to support the development and attraction of new businesses, and to retain and expand existing businesses through the implementation of a formal Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) Program.
- The provincial government's use of this information to develop appropriate, action-oriented policies and programs to support the development of a positive business climate in Nova Scotia.

3. DMA will lead governance and structural reform by providing support for municipalities that are committed to a process of re-structuring.

Outcome to be achieved: Healthy vibrant municipal communities with sound governance structures, authority and financial sustainability

Goals:

- Enhance the overall financial health of communities in Nova Scotia
- Improve support for municipalities
- Improve communities and social well-being pursuant to the OneNS Report.

Actions - to achieve success, DMA will:

- Implement the Financial Condition Index (FCI). The FCI applies a threshold to 15 financial indicators to identify areas that the municipality should focus on in terms of issue identification, mitigating risks, and long term planning.

- Continue to implement fiscal review report by partnering with municipalities. Focus is on aligning municipal and provincial priorities in the area of revenues, expenditures, non-financial supports as well as grant portfolios.
- Develop programs and tools to support efficient and effective municipal governance structures and regional approaches to providing shared services

Inputs:

- Three municipal advisors.
- Financial Condition Index.
- The assignment of a transition coordinator.

Performance measures:

Outcome(s)	Annual Priorities (actions to achieve outcome)	Measure	Data/ Base Year	TARGET for 2015-16	Long-term Target	Trends
Healthy vibrant municipal communities with sound governance structures, authority and financial sustainability	Help municipal units address areas of financial risk	Tracking number of municipalities with plans to address six or more "red" indicators in the FCI over a period of three years	2015/16	Development of a process to identify municipal units at risk	All municipal units with trends of red indicators have action plans in place to address	N/A

4. DMA will administer and support any new infrastructure programs like the New Building Canada Plan, which address local priorities while contributing to national and regional objectives.

Outcome to be achieved: Support economic growth, a clean environment and stronger communities in Nova Scotia.

Goals:

- Enhance economic competitiveness, encourage job creation and strengthen trade corridors.
- Maximize the use of local government's resources and expertise.
- Increase long term prosperity.

Actions - to achieve success, DMA will:

- Partner with federal and municipal governments to improve municipal infrastructure.

Inputs:

- We currently have seven FTEs that work in the Grants and Programs Division whose primarily responsibility includes the administration and distribution of federal and provincial funding programs, which totals $852 million over the next 10 years. The roles range from Engineers that work with project proponents to financial staff and program manager. Our total budget for the New Building Canada Fund is $200 million, as the province pays one third of the share for all approved projects. Additionally, DMA administers the Federal Gas Tax Program, which will allocate approximately $580 million to Nova Scotia's municipalities over the next ten years.

Performance measures:

Outcome (s)	Annual Priorities	Measure	Data/Base year	Target for 2015/16	Long Term target	Trends
Support economic growth, a clean environment and stronger communities in Nova Scotia.	Improved support for municipalities	Turnaround time for payout of completed claims	2015/16	30 days.	Consistently meeting target	N/A – new measure

5. Enhance land use planning to support economic development through implementing land use planning as a component of Goal 17 from the One NS Report.

Outcome to be achieved: Moving to a system that ensures a minimum level of land use planning being undertaken in all municipalities in order to reduce land use conflicts, enhance the protection of public safety, preserve investments in public infrastructure, and protect the environment.

Goals:

- Develop a provincial approach to align land use planning with economic growth
- Continue to review of Statements of Provincial Interest (SPIs) which outline the province's vision for protecting Nova Scotia's land and water resources.

Actions - to achieve success, DMA will:

- DMA will work with other government departments including DNR, Environment, TIR, Agriculture and Fisheries to develop a provincial approach to land use planning.

- Develop options for municipal/provincial land use planning – Moving to a system that ensures a minimum level of land use planning being undertaken in all municipalities in order to reduce land use conflicts, enhance the protection of public safety, preserve investments in public infrastructure, and protect the environment.

Inputs:

- Staff dedicated to achieving outcome.

Performance measures:

Outcome(s)	Annual Priorities (actions to achieve outcome)	Measure	Data/ Base Year	TARGET for 2015-16	Long-term Target	Trends
Healthy Vibrant municipal communities with sound governance structures, authority and financial sustainability.	Enhanced land use planning in support of economic development	Minimum standard for municipal planning across the province	Establishing baseline	Review research - look for common themes/programs to address key priorities	100% provincial coverage	N/A new measure
	Improved support for municipalities	Number of municipalities receiving capacity building training for land use planning	2015/16	25%	90% of all municipalities have received training	N/A new measure

Core Responsibilities and Services:

Municipal Affairs focuses on a broad range of core responsibilities and services. Over the coming year our staff will work closely with municipalities and other key partners to deliver strategic high quality services, many of which align with the OneNS Report.

Outcome to be achieved:

The delivery of core services by government to Nova Scotians is effective and efficient, and the budget is balanced with expected surplus by 2017-18.

Actions:

The following are the actions/initiatives that DMA will be delivering in terms of core services:

- Continue to collaborate with municipalities, the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia and the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities to advance the large scale legislative reviews of the *Municipal Government Act* and the *Halifax Regional Municipality Charter*.
- Support municipalities to develop their municipal planning strategies and land use by-laws.
- Support municipal units to address areas of financial risk.
- Administer a variety of programs and grants (operating and capital) that provide funding to municipalities and not-for-profit organizations which support municipal development and infrastructure.
- Educate, train and provide advisory services to enhance the capabilities of partners, stakeholders and citizens.
- The Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) carries out fire inspections by request, complaint, and/or audit and investigate fires as required to ensure compliance with the legislation.
- The OFM Marshal provides a system for approving plans for building construction which includes the provision of advice and the inspection of the site, where possible.
- The Emergency Management Office (EMO) develops and delivers a variety of emergency management training programs throughout Nova Scotia.
- Provincial Coordination Centre (PCC) – This Centre facilitates a coordinated response to an emergency or other significant event by provincial governmental authorities and other governmental, first responder and critical infrastructure partners. The PCC is co-located with similar municipal (HRM) and federal facilities thereby further enhancing opportunities for collaboration during times of activation.
- The provincial 911 service delivers a consistent and timely processing of all 911 calls via the identification of the nature and location of the emergency experienced by the caller. The service handles approximately 230,000 calls each year and ensures a consistent service delivery via commonality of both equipment and Standard Operation Procedures/Training.

Inputs:

- There are 84 FTE's to perform core services.
- Collaboration will continue with partners including UNSM, AMANS and municipal Units.
- Project Director in place for 18 months to lead legislative review

See Budget Template for financial inputs.

Performance measures:

Effective and collaborative fire prevention programs and services, emergency management index

Outcome(s)	Annual Priorities (actions to achieve outcome)	Measure	Data/ Base Year	TARGET for 2015-16	Long-term Target	Trends
Consistent processing of 911 calls in alignment with established standard operating procedures (SOP).	Utilization of an established 911 call scoring process in order to measure results	The achievement of a 92% compliance with SOP's on a province wide basis	93.5%	94.0%	95.0%	Annualized results are within the margin of error (+/- 2%)
Effective and collaborative fire prevention programs and services	Fire prevention	Percentage of registered premises that are inspected each year	TBD	33% of registered premises	Ensure that every registered premise in the province is inspected in a three year cycle	
	Education	Number of institutional clients trained in education sessions		More than 200	Ensure that health care workers across the province receive fire safety training on equipment, roles and responsibilities in care facilities	

Grants, Programs and Operations – Completed claim turnaround time (See **Performance Measures above**).

Finance – FCI (See **Performance Measures above**).

Legislative Review – Final recommendations ready for review by Government October 2016

Department of Municipal Affairs			
	2015-2016 Estimate	2015-2016 Forecast	2016-2017 Estimate
Program & Service Area	*($thousands)*	*($thousands)*	*($thousands)*
Senior Management	669	654	693
Grants, Programs & Operations	152,763	144,468	169,912
Policy, Planning & Advisory Services	7,582	7,827	7,238
Emergency Management Office	6,460	6,642	6,540
Total Program Expenses	**167,474**	**159,591**	**184,383**
Ordinary Recoveries	**100,249**	**99,723**	**105,353**
Provincial Funded Staff (FTEs)	72.2	66.1	72.2